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## Virtual ‘Cash Mobs’ Support Local Businesses in Six NM MainStreet Districts

### *Virtual Shopping Events Are Safe and Profitable*

**Santa Fe, N.M.** – The New Mexico MainStreet (NMMS) program announced today that six districts are using ‘Cash Mob’ virtual events to support local businesses during the pandemic and upcoming holiday season. Events are hosted on Facebook Live where participants bid on items, arrange payment and socialize during the fun two-hour session. Lively hosts entertain and educate as they sell items and encourage viewers to shop locally to contribute to their communities. This year, ‘Cash Mob’ has helped businesses stay open and allowed shoppers to buy local goods safely from home.

“Virtual ‘Cash Mob’ events are another way New Mexican businesses have adapted during the current health and economic crises,” Economic Development Secretary Alicia J. Keyes said. “I’m proud that NM MainStreet districts are supporting the health and safety of their communities while still being innovative and flexible as they prepare for the holiday shopping season.”

The [Raton ‘Cash Mob’](#) was formed by Raton residents Lynette Simpson and Melissa Unger, who have hosted in-person and virtual events for nearly a decade. When the pandemic and quarantine started last spring, Brenda Ferri from Raton MainStreet partnered with Jessica Barfield from the City of Raton Economic Development Department, Geoff Peterson and Patricia Duran from the Center for Community Innovation and the Raton ‘Cash Mob’ to host virtual Facebook events to save local businesses.

“Our MainStreet and Arts & Cultural districts have stepped up to show that local businesses are vital to the economic health of our state,” NMMS Director Daniel Gutierrez said. “By using technology and social media to support downtown businesses, these districts are helping communities thrive during the pandemic and beyond.”

- [Raton MainStreet](#) co-hosted weekly ‘Cash Mob’ events throughout the summer. They generously shared the format and technical specifications with organizations in Colorado and several NMMS districts. Raton MainStreet raised over \$40,000 in just three months of Facebook Live events. [Raton ‘Cash Mob’](#) will present the *12 Days of Christmas* ‘Cash Mob’ series beginning November 3, 2020 to help people shop locally for the holidays. “We are so proud that we have been able to save our town, one small business at a time,” said Raton MainStreet Executive Director Brenda Ferri.
- [MainStreet de Las Vegas](#) facilitated [‘Cash Mob’](#) virtual events all summer and raised over \$46,000 for 16 local businesses. They plan to continue events during the upcoming holiday shopping season. The ‘Cash Mob’ on November 4, 2020 will benefit MainStreet de Las Vegas. “We are thrilled with the success of our ‘Cash Mob!’ We start our Holiday ‘Cash Mob’ Market on November 18<sup>th</sup>. Come shop with us,” said MainStreet de Las Vegas Executive Director Michael Peranteau.
- [Clovis MainStreet](#) hosted three ‘Save Our Stores’ flash sales on Facebook for local businesses throughout the summer. They’re planning to ramp up this effort and schedule more events to encourage local shopping this holiday season. “Thanks to Raton ‘Cash Mob’ and Raton MainStreet’s expertise and years of experience, we have been able to learn from their community successes and bring that to our community. We are excited to continue to build on new and creative ways to support our local small businesses,” said Clovis MainStreet Executive Director Lisa Pellegrino-Spear.
- [Tucumcari MainStreet](#) is partnering with the Tucumcari/Quay County Chamber of Commerce to host Christmas ‘Cash Mob’ virtual events in November and December to help small businesses. The events will be a part of their

2020 Very Merry Tucumcari events. “These virtual ‘Cash Mobs’ are a wonderful way to show your love for local businesses this holiday season. One business at a time, we can help save our local small businesses,” said Tucumcari MainStreet Executive Director Connie Loveland.

- [Silver City MainStreet](#) will start promoting ‘Cash Mob’ virtual events in November. They have 11 businesses signed up for their Facebook live events. “These events are a win-win. They help our small businesses survive and let residents shop safely from home,” said Silver City MainStreet Executive Director Charmaine Wait.
- The [Northwest New Mexico Arts Council](#) (part of Farmington’s designated Arts & Cultural district) hosted their first ‘Virtual Spotlight’ at the Artifacts 302 art gallery on October 8, 2020. Every week, they will highlight a different art gallery or downtown business on Facebook to promote Small Business Saturday. They also encourage fans to like or share the live video for a chance to win a \$25 gift card to the participating business in #theHeARTofFarmingtonACD.

When the pandemic and quarantine started, NMMS Revitalization Specialists produced a series of webinars to train business owners on online marketing and ecommerce, including PayPal and Square setup. The goal of these webinars was to get businesses established on the Buy NM Local website, [buynmlocal.com](http://buynmlocal.com). Recordings of these webinars can be viewed on [NMMS’s YouTube channel](#).

The ‘Cash Mob’ phenomenon has been highlighted by KOB-TV, KRQE-TV, Main Street America, and the Las Vegas Optic.

Lynette Simpson and Melissa Unger hosting Raton ‘Cash Mob’ at 111 Park Espresso Bar & Café on 5/7/2020



MainStreet de Las Vegas Board Members Reina Fernandez and Sara Jo Mathews hosting ‘Cash Mob’ at Blowin’ in the Wind gift shop on 7/1/2020



Clovis MainStreet Executive Director Lisa Pellegrino-Spear hosting ‘Save Our Stores’ at 2 Shabby Divas on 4/28/2020



Tucumcari MainStreet’s Christmas ‘Cash Mob’ Advertisement (10/23/2020)



Silver City MainStreet’s ‘Cash Mob’ Logo



Northwest New Mexico Arts Council’s ‘Virtual Spotlight’ Advertisement (10/27/2020)



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**About New Mexico MainStreet:** New Mexico MainStreet develops local capacity to engage people, rebuild places and grow the entrepreneurial, creative & business environment resulting in economically thriving downtowns, greater business & employment opportunities and a higher quality of life. New Mexico MainStreet was founded in 1984 and currently serves 31 affiliated MainStreet Districts, 12 state-authorized Arts & Cultural Districts, 7 Frontier & Native American Community projects, and 8 Historic Theaters. Learn more about New Mexico MainStreet's programs at [www.nmmainstreet.org](http://www.nmmainstreet.org). New Mexico MainStreet is a program of the New Mexico Economic Development Department, [gonm.biz](http://gonm.biz).